JOHN ALVEY TURNER'S MUSICAL MONTHLY

KEYNOTES

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KEYNOTES HOUSE, 68, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1. EDITED BY LOUIS A. UNGER. Telephone: MUSEUM 4388.

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Vol. V. No. 3. MARCH, 1929. PRICE SIXPENCE.

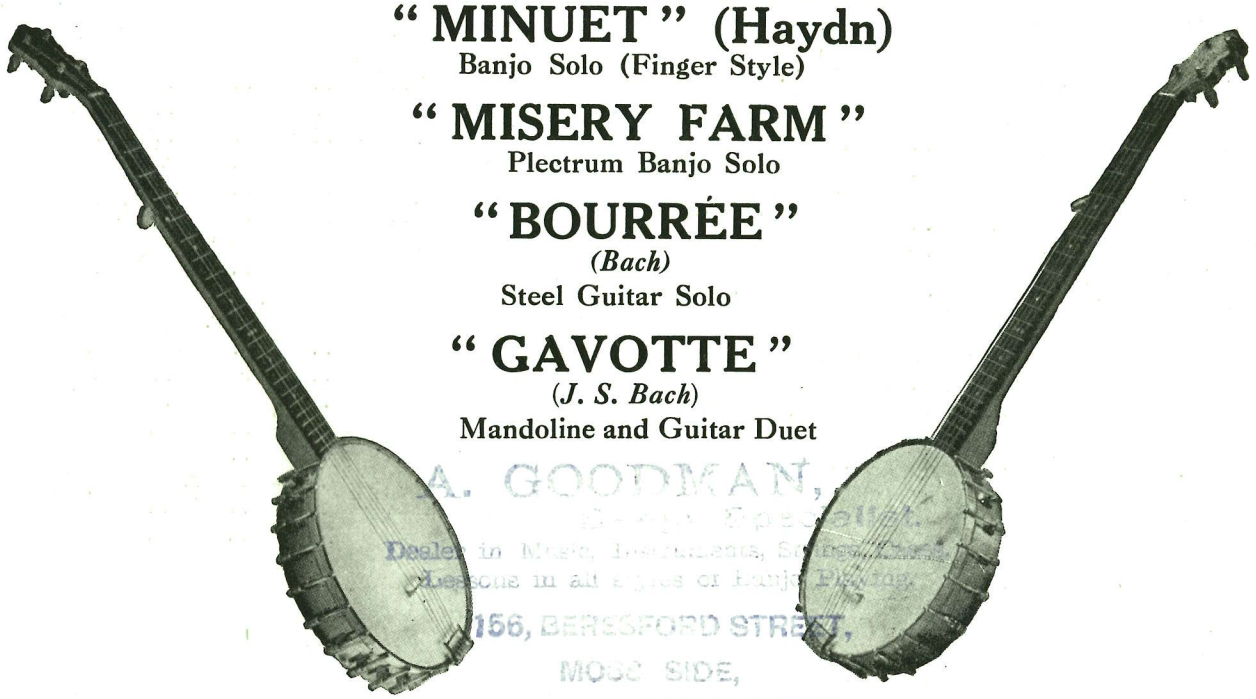
MUSIC IN THIS ISSUE

"MINUET" (Haydn)
Banjo Solo (Finger Style)

"MISERY FARM"
Plectrum Banjo Solo

"BOURRÉE"
(Bach)
Steel Guitar Solo

"GAVOTTE"
(J. S. Bach)
Mandoline and Guitar Duet



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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Contents, Broadcasting Notes, etc.	33
Single String Plectrum Tremolo—by E. T. Taylor	34
B.M.G. Matters—by A. de Vekey...	35
B.M.G. Clubs and their Work—by B. W. Dykes...	36
Practical Memory Training—by W. H. Fowler ...	37
Lines to My Old Banjo—by Will Squire	38
The Left Thumb—by Bernard Sheaff	38
"Minuet" (Finger Banjo Solo)—*arr.* by Bernard Sheaff	39
"Bourrée" (Steel Guitar Solo)	40-41
"Gavotte" (Mandoline and Guitar Duet) ...	42
"Misery Farm" (Plectrum Banjo Solo)—*arr.* by E. T. Taylor	43
Notes on the Guitar	44
The Steel Guitar—by Sheldon Green	45
Plectrum Music in this Issue	46
Club Pages	47-48

ASTON BANJO CLUB.

The above Club will be holding their next concert at the Kensington Town Hall, on May 4th. The following artistes have been booked:

Joe Morley.
Joseph Bull.
J. G. Harris.
Fred Morris (Entertainer).
Miss B. Jones (Soprano).

Further particulars in the next issue.

BROADCASTING DATES.

Eugene Earle will broadcast from Birmingham on Wednesday, April 3rd.

Mario de Pietro will broadcast from 5GB on March 5th, at 8.15 p.m.; also from 2LO on March 16th, at 9.35 p.m.

LEGER LINES.

In the next issue we shall publish the guitar and ukulele accompaniment to the steel guitar solo "Bourrée" in this issue, also we are promised another guitar solo by A de Vekey for the April number.

Many readers have asked who it is that plays the guitar so well in the play "100 Years Old" at the Lyric, Hammersmith.

The playing is by A. F. Cramer and Babs Randall, whose playing was a delight to listen to at J. A. Turner's last concert.

In the next issue we are pleased to announce Mr. F. Winslow will contribute an article on his adjustment to the Guitar.

AN APOLOGY.

The Editor regrets delay of this issue through illness.

SINGLE STRING PLECTRUM TREMOLO.

By ERNEST T. TAYLOR.

A GREAT many players of the banjo, tenor-banjo, and mandoline find a difficulty in the production of a good single string tremolo. In many cases this is due to the neglect of the player to spend sufficient time, and to exercise sufficient care, in the practise of the tremolo itself. It is, of course, much more interesting to play the air of some popular piece of music than to practise a scale, but the benefit of practising the latter in the various forms leading up to the tremolo (as found in most instruction books) is that owing to the melody of the scale being so familiar to the ear of the player, he or she is able to concentrate solely on the effort to make the right hand move in the correct manner.

To those readers who feel that they are weak in this style of playing I would offer a suggestion that they turn to their instruction book and devote a certain amount of time to practising the preliminary exercises for plectrum tremolo, particularly the scale in quavers, semiquavers and demisemiquavers—three forms. It is only by completely mastering these first essentials that the finished effect can be ultimately obtained.

When playing the scale in the various forms mentioned above, great care should be taken in order to give the correct number of strokes to each note.

It would be as well to mention here that the counting of strokes (which is a very good thing from the point of view of an exercise to obtain regularity in the use of the plectrum) should be dispensed with entirely when playing a melody in the finished tremolo style, the hand being made to move so rapidly that the effect is that of a, shall we say, slightly shivering, sustained sound. The counting of strokes in a tremolo movement would make a very mechanical effect, which is the very opposite to what is required.

As I have mentioned in previous articles, I consider that it is absolutely necessary to use an arched wrist in order that the maximum amount of freedom in movement of the hand may be obtained. The hand should swing easily from the wrist, and care should be taken that there is no jerking, the movement being quite regular. The little finger should move with the remainder of the hand, but I consider it advisable that it should touch the vellum during the movement, only lightly, of course.

The plectrum should not be held so that it points straight down towards the vellum, but the hand turned slightly so that the plectrum points nearer to the head of the player. The plectrum will then strike the strings at an angle, the benefit of this being that the full effect of the arched wrist is obtained, the whole hand being able to move quite freely, as there is no danger of striking the next string, either with a down or up stroke. In the first instance, if playing on any string other than the first, the next string will stop the plectrum in its course. In the case of an up stroke, there is no danger of striking the next string as the angle of strike will eliminate all fear of this.

The plectrum should be held firmly, otherwise only a very poor quality of tone will be produced. On the other hand it should not be gripped too tightly, or a stiffening of the hand will take place, the resultant effect being very harsh.

The great need is to obtain a rapid and regular movement of the hand, and I am sure that this will be found quite easily attainable, providing sufficient practise of the rudiments of the tremolo is done, and care taken to see that the action of the hand is correct.

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B.M.G. Matters.

By A. de Vekey.

SEVERAL requests are in for a steel-guitar solo from the works of the immortal Bach.

The applications are more or less in the same vein, *i.e.*, for something "worth while working up" of some "well-known classic," something that "after it is learnt, won't be out of date, like the popular songs."

Bach numbers suiting the regular guitar so well, has created a desire among steel-guitarists for an arrangement for their instrument.

Hence the solo in this issue.

Play it with fingering as marked, memorize it, then work it up.

It will be noticed, in instances where the slide (<) is marked, it will only be necessary to strike the first note, the passing of the steel to the next note being sufficient to sound it clearly, without being struck again by fingers of the right hand.

If in doubt on any little point, send along a line.

Now to the "Ukeists" article in last month's KEYNOTES, by Mr. B. W. Dykes.

I would like to meet Mr. Dykes sometime when this way (a nice place Bournemouth). I think we could spend an interesting time together.

While his views are generally speaking indisputable, there is no gainsaying the fact that ukeists do enjoy themselves, even if their means of musical self-expression as a class be somewhat on the limited side.

It is, of course, largely the way they have been schooled, or catered for in the past, that makes their efforts to entertain rather trying to those who have studied in a different way on other instruments, but for downright sheer enjoyment, a party of enthusiastic ukeists wants some beating.

I was once hon. sec. of a motor club, and call to mind a rehearsal of some 20 ukeists to play at the Christchurch Carnival in aid of the local hospital, and certainly, the amount of gusto, verve and merriment put into their show, made it one of the prominent features of the day.

Certainly, I admit that the *average* ukeite's efforts, applied to, or in conjunction with, a dainty Cammeyer "Miniature" would be nothing short of a musical disaster, yet I am prepared to prove that a properly arranged, properly played part, alternately picked in the guitar style, and interspersed with certain "strokes," can furnish a fascinating and most attractive accompaniment.

While in perfect agreement with Mr. Dykes on the several points he writes so entertainingly about, I would ask if he has ever heard a high grade Terz guitar. This is a brilliant solo instrument used in conjunction with the regular guitar, for which some very fine numbers have been written by some of the guitar masters. But what has this to do with the ukulele some may ask. Let me explain.

The small ukulele and uke-banjo have served a purpose. While they have not claimed to be anything serious in a musical sense, they can truthfully claim to have provided enjoyment for thousands.

Even some of the shining lights in the fretted instrument field at one time in the early days of their career, must have derived some pleasure on having mastered even an easy accompaniment to a song, followed by some very simple pieces, and gradually leading up to the more advanced style of playing.

In a way, this might be applied to some ukeites, who at one time were getting a lot of fun and enjoyment out of the ability to strum to the popular songs; tire of this, and go on to something with more in it.

The "something with more in it," if they want an instrument with the same tuning, exists in the modern long-scale ukulele, which has a larger body, is easier to finger, has a far richer tone, having as a matter of fact, a tone similar to that of the Terz guitar as regards quality in the upper register, but rather even more penetrating and brilliant.

As a "lead" instrument of this type, it is worthy of serious study, for as Mr. Dykes very rightly indicates, no instrument that can be "learnt" (?) in a few lessons is worth bothering about.

Even for those who have not the time or the inclination to go further than the popular song strum, they will get a far richer, far more musical tone by using the larger model. Moreover, the solo possibilities *are there*, if they care to study and develop them.

Perhaps in some future issue, the Editor will allow some 2nd banjo part of some favourite banjo solo to appear for the uke-banjo, and some ukulele arrangement of some guitar part (in musical notation) to go with some mandoline number, for the vellum sounding-board instruments, as we all know, blend better with instruments of their own family.

Either may be arranged so that they may be played with a marked degree of effectiveness with almost any type of solo.

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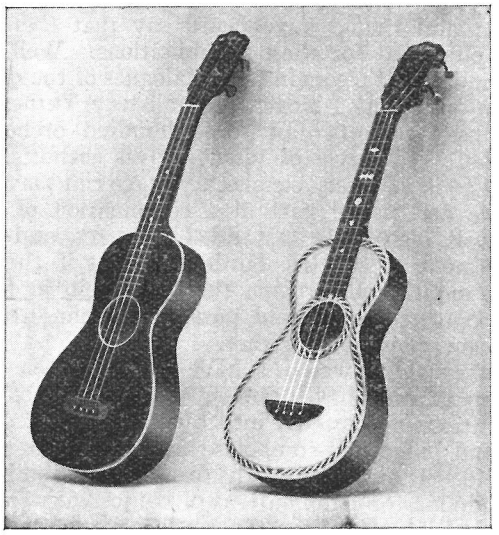

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B.M.G. Clubs and their Work.

By B. W. DYKES.

THERE are now many clubs being and having been formed all over the country. The club I am chiefly interested in is the East London B.M.G. Club.

I have given a good deal of my time during the past two years to the interests of this club, and I think I have derived a measure of appreciation from the members and the public. I say the public because I am sure they have, by their own words, enjoyed the several concerts that we have given them, nevertheless, there is something lacking. We have members join and others leave. The few die-hards, about 20 members, are very enthusiastic, and we enjoy our evenings immensely, but still we are only in a state of shall I say semi-consciousness, and I have very carefully diagnosed the trouble which I think is, briefly, as follows :—

A student of one of these instruments wants to join a society where he or she can mix with others of the same turn of mind. They turn up at the usual *monthly* meeting, and play their solo or a duet with another member. So far so good ; they come along for a few months and then resign. Undoubtedly a lack of interest has crept into the mind. What is it ? I can give a pretty shrewd guess. Not enough variety. Once a month is not enough. They should meet every week. I think I can safely say that no other club in the country has ever attempted to get their members formed up into a well-balanced orchestra the same as we have. (At least, I have never seen any mention of such playing in the usual monthly reports of Club meetings, except our own). I have seen community playing, but that is different. In our combination we have 1st banjos, 2nd banjos, tenor banjos, 1st and 2nd banjolines, piccolo banjo and piano. We also have another combination which consists of 1st and 2nd mandolines and tenor and bass mandolas and tenor and Spanish guitars.

We play suitable music for both combinations. I might add that I have heard say that there is no music published for these combinations. Well, I can find hundreds of pieces in the catalogues of the different London publishers. Messrs. John Alvey Turner have, I suppose, some two or three hundred orchestrated numbers. This style of playing gives enthusiasm. A pupil who is in a very elementary stage can play a very effective and useful part in a combination of instruments ; it also gives an added interest ; and an encouragement to practice harder, whereas if they meet once a month and struggle through a solo in front of better players they would possibly get an attack of nerves and give up altogether.

Another thing which I have not yet seen in this country is meetings between different clubs where competitions are entered into by the various combinations and judged by competent authorities for the cup or shield. I am quite ready to enter my combination of mandolines or combinations of banjos with any other clubs, and if some of the big music houses were to give an incentive of this kind, what a thing it would be to have our annual band competitions the same as military or brass bands have.

It's done in America and on the continent, so why not here. It only wants someone to start the ball rolling and that's what *I* am trying to do. Is any club seconding my proposition ? If so, publish your agreement in next month's KEYNOTES, and then we can see a little daylight.

Of course these competitions would (when being judged) have the number of players taken into consideration, so a combination of say eight would stand just as much chance as one of, say 20 instruments. All would play the same pieces and give their own peculiar rendering. What an interest would be created.

Well, come along, B.M.G. Clubs, try and create a demand for your music. Things want bucking up in this country, and I think the interest that is being gradually shown by the formation of these clubs is the commencement of a great revival of the banjo, mandoline and guitar, but it's got to be pushed the same as any other commodity.

The East London B.M.G. Club is in for a start. Who's next ?

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Practical Memory Training,—By W. H. Fowler.

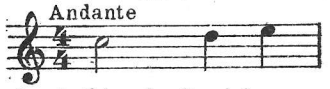
In my letter to the Editor of KEYNOTES I indicated the various forms of impression which go to make up what is known as "memory." Briefly, they are by ear, sight, touch and musical analysis. I condemned the mechanical process of memorising by repeatedly playing the notes until they are remembered, without attempting to penetrate the design of the composer.

Memory must be aided by some form of impression which will enable us to associate one idea with another. However, it is not my intention to enlarge upon the subject, which has been dealt with exhaustively by several well-known writers in the B.M. & G. world. What I am concerned with is the most neglected (especially by banjoists) of all things in memory training, i.e., musical analysis. It is this ability to analyse which helps one to penetrate the design of the composer, and so more surely and rapidly assimilate that which we desire to possess mentally.

Now, presupposing that the reader understands all the major and minor scales, with their common chords and can write or play them readily. I will attempt to show how a method can be formulated whereby the mind will be more prepared for the process of musical analysis. I should say here that repetition and sequence (which is a kind of altered repetition) is a prominent feature in the structure of music. I will now select a motive which we will imagine is the germ from which a composer builds an entire solo. First, let us understand the terms "motive" and "sequence." Let the motive be A.B.C. The sequence would be B.C.D, etc., ascending, or G.A.B descending. It is this simple conception of sequence which I will use in the exercises which follow, and should be taken literally, i.e., the order of following.

Here is the motive :—

No 1

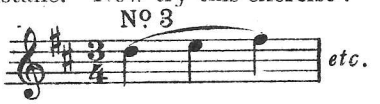


Carefully look at this, don't pick up your banjo or guitar yet. Begin by examining this short diatonic motive carefully. Every point and feature is to be observed. For example: (1) What is the key? (every signature may represent a major or its relative minor). (2) What is the time signature? (3) Upon what tone of the key does the motive begin? (4) Describe it melodically; is it a scale or chord figure? does it go up or down, and how far? (5) Describe it rhythmically; what is the value of the notes? (6) Count it according to the time signature.

It will be observed that the motive begins on the tonic note of C, and ascends scalewise to the third of the key two beats to the first note and one to each of the following notes. Now for the next step. The motive is to be repeated on each degree of the scale (which is the simplest melody to memorise) and each sequence to begin on the note next above the beginning of the preceding figure. Thus :—

Now take up your instrument and proceed slowly to execute the design, which is a short period in sequence form. Keep the motive in mind and repeat upon every note of the scale. (I am not concerned here with the method of fingering, but before the design is attempted the fingering should be determined according to well-known methods).

As the design becomes more familiar, the tempo should be increased until it can be played Allegro without a mistake. Now try this exercise :—



Follow out the same idea with this one, which has the effect of a proper cadence; this is, of course, suitable to the end of a period (which I ought to explain is also termed a musical sentence, and usually consists of eight bars.) A cadence means a close or ending. The motive numbered (3) may also be used thus :—

that is to say, in a *descending* movement, using the scale as an outline as suggested.

Now go back to motive No. 1 and transpose (you need no music) into the following keys—D major, E flat major, F major, G major, A flat and B flat major.

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To my old "jo"?—my true and constant friend.
What other pal could cheer me so along life's way
When skies, from blue, so often change to grey!
How often have you lulled my weary mind to rest,
As with my loving fingers I've caressed
Your willing strings—and from your soul some soothing strain
Hath brought me peace and happiness again.
How much misunderstood you are—because of birth
And old associations—your real worth
To those who know you by your humble name alone
Is still quite undiscovered, quite unknown.
They only think of you in terms of "Old Black Joe"
Or "Old Kentucky Home"—they do not know
The tender depths of your sweet soul as well as I,
As fondly 'gainst my breast you snugly lie,
How much abused you are by those who know you not,
And how you then rebel against your lot!
Your strident, rasping voice, raised high in shrill protest
Cries out for help, to those who love you best.
But I, myself, old pal, have heard you speak to me
In tones of love and deepest sympathy;
As when, some half-forgotten melody of old
Plucked from your heart, brings mem'ries tinged with gold.
How much I love you too, when 'neath my stumbling hand
Some masterpiece of melody so grand
I try to coax from you, my lonely heart to thrill
And tribute pay to some old master's skill!
Your rhythmic harmonies send out their bright appeal
When restless feet their need for action feel:
Unlimited your scope to please in every need
A friend so tried and true—a pal indeed!

. . . . . .

So, as on life's uncertain path my footsteps go,
Together there you'll find my faithful "jo"—
And I—old pals of years whose friendship none can part
Too strong its chords are bound about my heart!

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THE LEFT THUMB.

By Bernard Sheaff.

IT would not be thought that there is anything in the action of the left thumb worth much consideration. For, with the right thumb and nearly all the fingers having so much to do, it might seem that the left thumb has no "action" at all beyond its being carried up and down the banjo arm by the left hand! It plays, all the same, quite an important part in left-hand technique—a very important part, in fact—for the left hand would be in almost insurmountable difficulties without it! And it is equally true that the left hand cannot be correct unless the thumb is properly used. Not that I am saying the thumb governs everything, and once it is right the hand will at once follow. As a matter of fact, it is generally the case that the acquiring of the proper position of the left hand guides the thumb, unobserved, in the right way.

However, there are doubtless many players, especially beginners, whose left hand actions are hampered by an uncomfortable thumb position, so a few remarks on the subject may not be amiss.

In the first place, I recommend—and personally use—a "natural" position for the left hand, the foundation of which is the straight wrist—the back of the hand and the forearm held in a straight line. The natural position of the left thumb is clearly shown if the hand is held in a relaxed manner, palm upwards, for the thumb is then generally found on a level with the fingers, and with the top joint about an inch or so from the side of the index finger.

A less natural, and much less comfortable position of the thumb is illustrated by again holding the hand, palm upwards, but twisting the thumb across over the middle of the palm. In actual use on the banjo, this position of the thumb generally accompanies a stiff bent wrist and an ungainly spreading of the fingers. Broadly speaking, then, the best place for the thumb on the arm of the banjo is at a point behind the fret stopped by the first finger. The thumb, using the second method just criticised, would touch the arm between the first and fourth finger frets, and it would also be incorrect in other respects as well. We will, I think, only concern ourselves with examples of the best position for the thumb (the bad ways are so numerous!) and this can best be explained by describing the appearance of the thumb when the commonly used chord positions are made. When the most elementary chord on the banjo—E, C and G open—is made, the thumb should rest in the hallowed out curve between the arm and the head—a natural resting place for the thumb in first position chords. The top joint should curve back slightly, and this joint should lie in a line with the keyboard—not pointing at right angles to the arm. In this position a small portion of the thumb should project above the level of the keyboard. Only the top joint of the thumb should be in contact with the arm of the banjo. The remainder of the thumb, including the "ball" should be clear away from contact.

In another issue, I will describe the alteration in the thumb position for the higher position chords, and when barre and position barre chords are made.

(To be continued.)

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To Mrs A. C. Drummond.

Bourrée Loure.

Arr. by A. de VEKEY. STEEL GUITAR SOLO. J. S. BACH.

STEEL GUITAR SOLO.

R.S. indicates "Reversed steel".

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Gavotte.

MANDOLINE & GUITAR DUET. J. S. BACH.

Allegro vivace.

Misery Farm.

PLECTRUM BANJO SOLO.

Arr. by ERNEST TAYLOR.

by C. JAY WALLIS.

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Mar. /29.

Notes on the Guitar—Octave Harmonics.

THESE notes are written with the object of giving some practical hints to the learner, and do not claim to be in any way exhaustive of the subject dealt with. Therefore the writer asks to be excused for not attempting to offer any theoretical explanations —more conveniently obtained from a text book on acoustics—and begs leave to state a few elementary facts on the production of octave harmonics with special application to the guitar.

A simple measurement will show that the twelfth fret on the guitar is exactly half way between nut and bridge. Similarly, the thirteenth fret will be found to be half way between the first fret and the bridge, and proceeding in the same manner we shall find that the halves of the distances from the second, third, fourth or any other frets and the bridge are respectively on the 14th, 15th, 16th frets, and so on.

Now, since the octave harmonics are produced at the half of the string, the harmonic on the open string may be made with one hand only, thus :— Place the tip of the *first finger**—not the thumb !— of the right hand

[*The reasons from departing from the style of " thumb and forefinger," as advocated in some Tutors, will be given later.]

lightly on the string at the 12th fret, and pluck the string with the *third finger,** lifting then the first finger so as to allow the vibrations to continue as required. When the string is stopped, however, the two hands are needed, the left to stop the string, and the right to make the harmonic. For instance, if the second string is stopped at its first fret, the octave harmonic will be on the 13th, and produced as stated before, with first and third fingers. It follows then that when a string is stopped at the second, third, or any other frets, the octave harmonics occur on the 14th, 15th, or other frets. That is, for every fret the left hand progresses towards the right, the first finger of this hand gets one fret nearer the bridge.

The student will now be in a position to realise my predicament the first time I saw a piece of Tarrega's music. It happened by a mere accident, and as good or bad luck—call it what you like—would have it, what do you think it was ? A transcription of the slow movement of Beethoven's Sonata Pathetique (Op. 13) !

Tarrega had a genius for transcriptions, and an inborn tact and sound judgment for choosing only such compositions that would rather gain than lose in the change. Many of the transcriptions he did, such as Mendelssohn's Canzonetta, and others, might be quoted as fine examples. On the other hand, he often worked at great masterpieces, not for the sake of the transcriptions he could make, but for study and inspiration. A good many of these transcriptions were never meant for publication.

But to resume, I came by it, and meant to have a go at it. A student of Beethoven, by the way, tells me that it is a remarkable transcription.

The original key of four flats had been transposed into three sharps, as being more suitable for the guitar. It did not look harder than some of the pieces had, and in fact, apart from one chord with an unusually long stretch, the first eight chords did not give one too much trouble. But now the puzzle began ! The next eight chords had all the melody notes marked in octave harmonics *with simultaneous basses* ! Thus :—

Now, as we have seen, these harmonics, in themselves, offer no great difficulty, but when you have been told, as I had, to make the " a double doigter " harmonics, as they are termed in English text books and music—with *thumb and first finger*, you wonder how you are going to get the bass in. Now, to make a long story short, the modern school—that makes a considerable use of these harmonics—says that octave harmonics are made, as explained at the beginning of these notes, with first and third fingers, *leaving thus the thumb free to play a bass*, and the second finger another note if necessary, and thus making it possible on the guitar to play a chord of three notes with the top one an octave harmonic.

If we now look at the above extract we see that the first finger of the left has to stop three strings at the second fret. The first finger of the right hand is placed on the second string, at the 14th fret, then the third finger and the thumb pluck the harmonic string and the bass, respectively, at the same time ; the next two notes of the chord may be played with first and second fingers. The third finger now falls on the D, fifth string, fifth fret, the harmonic being produced on the second string open, *i.e.*, at the 12th fret. The next three notes of the accompaniment are played on the fourth string with first and fourth fingers alternating. The remainder seems to require no further elucidation. Notice, however, with reference to the top B in the third bar, that the harmonics produced at the seventh and 19th frets on the open string are identical, and so is the harmonic made by stopping the string at the seventh fret and played, as explained, with first and third fingers at the 19th fret. Hence, the style actually adopted by the player will depend on the position he is playing, and the one which is to follow.

THE HARMONICS.

This piece is by no means easy, and to anyone sufficiently advanced, I should rather advise to get Tarrega's original compositions ; his " Arabian Serenade" is very fine and justly famous, just to mention one. But the piece introduced here was merely to illustrate octave harmonics with simultaneous basses. Incidentally, it gives us a glimpse of some of the intricacies of modern technique, which seems so easy when performed by some of the virtuosi. But, above all, it makes us realise, by inference, what an amount of work of love Tarrega must have done in order to establish the guitar on such sound basis, opening for it vistas of unprecedented prosperity and triumph.

E. L. G.

BANJO RECORDS IN STOCK

Thumbs Up. **Popinjay Polka**
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Donkey Laugh. **Jovial Huntsman**
Played by Joe Morley.

Marche Vivacite. **Valse Oriental**
The Kilties. **March of the Hebrides**
Played by Jan Wien.

Now Ready: "A Banjo Frolic"—"Ad Astra"—"Dimples," By Joe Morley.

The Steel-Guitar.

By B. SHELDON GREEN.

THE steel-guitar has come to stay—there's no doubt about it.

The peculiar tonal effect produced by the steel cannot be exactly duplicated on any other instrument. Vibrato well-executed on the zither-banjo is the nearest we can get to it.

I find finger-picks indispensable for any sort of playing; but Mr. A. F. Cramer in his book says he can get on without them for drawing-room work, and I daresay others whose finger-tips are a lot tougher than mine can do likewise.

Finger-picks as sold in shops are quite useless to me—I cannot get on with them at all. In all probability this is due to my having worked up a distinct banjo picking style of my own. By this I mean that instead of using the centre of the finger-tips, I use the *thumb-side edge* of them, *tilting* them slightly *backwards* towards the fourth finger. *I, however, use only the flesh of the finger, and never allow the nails to come in contact with the strings.* This is where I differ from Messrs. Cammeyer and Sheaff, both of whom (judging from their writings) let the string finish up on the nail before clearing the finger. However, as I am a banjo player first and a steel-guitarist after, I was obliged to think out a pick to suit me, and after quite a lot of experimenting I have shaped what answers the purpose very well.

I cut away a good deal of the roundness of the ordinary pick and get it down to the pointed shape.

When I am satisfied as to shape, I then fit it to the finger so as to get the "business end" where it will lie exactly over the little bit of finger which I use in banjo playing, and this enables me to get a good quality of tone and free from disagreeable clicking.

Clicking comes from the wide rounded tip of the ordinary pick coming in contact with the vibrating string, aggravated by the *slovenly style of feeling the string before picking.*

Pick boldly at the string and *clear it* with each pick of the finger.

I now shall say something about the *tuning* of the steel-guitar.

To me it is perfectly obvious that the Hawaiians, finding the regular Spanish guitar much too difficult of ready mastery, altered the tuning to that of the old American banjo system (three sharps), and later accidentally discovered the peculiar effect of the steel.

In no other way can I account for the three-sharp tuning. The first one to try this must have had some knowledge of the American "A" notation system of banjo playing, and simply tried out his tunes on the guitar. So far so good. What, however, I cannot understand is, why we enlightened people of the twentieth century should continue the three-sharp system.

Why cannot we tune in "G" and use a slightly larger instrument? This tuning would make us "one of the family" and not leave us in rather questionable isolation. To my mind the "G" tuning on a larger instrument would give a very much louder tone, and, as already stated, we would be "one of the family," and could "chip in" occasionally with other instruments.

Let me make it clear that I am not one to simplify anything unless this simplifying is really *an advantage.*

We want *more* tone from the steel-guitar, and we cannot get it without enlarging the instrument. A larger instrument with "A" tuning would necessitate a new gauge of strings throughout, and the strain on the longer arm would be very much greater. "G" tuning would necessitate no difference in stringing, provided the lengthened arm and large body were correctly proportioned. Further, *the advantage of being able to "chip in" is a very considerable one.*

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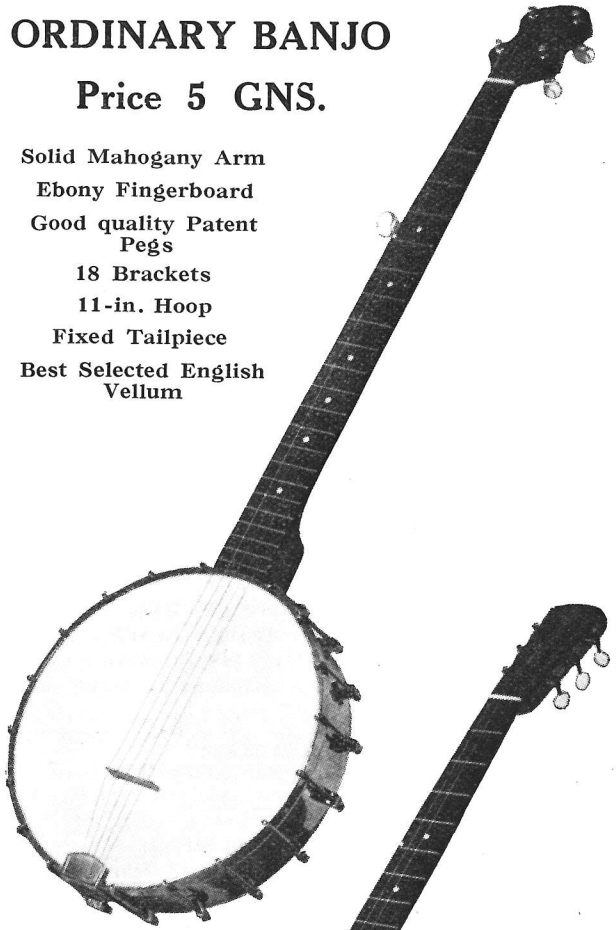

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PLECTRUM MUSIC IN THIS ISSUE.

By ERNEST TAYLOR.

MISERY FARM.

THIS is a very popular song by C. Jay Wallis, the composer of " All by Yourself in the Moonlight." For solo playing it should be played at a moderate fox-trot tempo.

It will be found quite easy to play, providing the finger indications are carefully followed. The player who is rather weak on time must watch bars 17, 18, 19 and 20 of the verse. It would be as well to count four *crotchet* beats to these bars, (instead of the two minim beats), or to any other bars which give trouble.

The elaborations in bars 7, 8, 15 and 16 of the verse, also the similarly numbered bars in the chorus, should be played over slowly at first by themselves, and then fitted in along with the melody when throughly mastered. They will, I think, be found to give a brightening effect to those portions of the solo where they are inserted.

The chord in the last bar but one of the chorus should be played tremolo, ending with a single stroke on the first beat of the last bar.

May I here express my thanks to those readers who have so kindly written to me personally to say that they appreciated the arrangement of old time melodies included in the December, and January issues. I hope to do something more of a similar nature at a later date.

Preston.
February 1st, 1929.

To the Editor KEYNOTES,

DEAR SIR,—Re. E. T. Taylor's arrangements in KEYNOTES. I would just like to mention how I enjoy playing his arrangements of " Rustic Bridge" etc., I wonder whether you would in some future issue consider it worth while to write plectrum solos (*tremolo* style for preference) on " Londonderry Air " and " The Desert Song."

Hope you don't mind my suggestions.

Yours sincerely
G. R.

[We shall probably be using some of the older popular melodies later on and have them arranged by Mr. Taylor, tremolo style—EDITOR.

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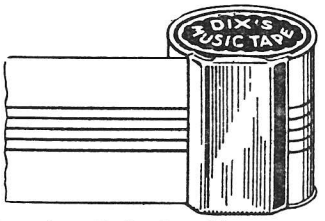

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BRISTOL B.M.G. CLUB.

MEETING January 25th, 1929. Club, "Club-mates" (Troise), "Tattoo" (Grimshaw), "Skipping Rope" (Ellis); two mandolines and guitar, "Poppyland" (Moore), Messrs. Matthews, May and Mulligan; banjo duet, "You and a Canoe" (Grimshaw), Mr. Ball and Son; banjo solo, "Merriment" (Morley), Mr. Griffiths; banjo trio, "Tune Tonic" (Grimshaw), Messrs. W. Ball, Lapham and Griffiths; two mandolines and guitar, "Spanish Dances" Messrs. Matthews, May and Mulligan; plectrum banjo solo, "Can't You Hear me say I Love You," "Pompadour" (Morley), Mr. Alf North; Club, "Charmaine" (Rapee), "Nigger Minstrels" (Grimshaw).

An enjoyable evening with keen playing.

Meeting, February 8th, 1929. Club, "Tired Hands" (Piantadosi), "Charmaine" (Rapee), "Nigger Minstrels" (Grimshaw); banjo solo, "Bonnie Scotland" (Kennedy), Mr. Beechey; banjo duet, "En Passant" (Oakley), Mr. Ball and Son; banjo solo, "Mr. Jolly-boy" (Grimshaw), Mr. Griffiths; mandoline solo, "Leonora" (Terrail), Miss Bray; banjo solo, "Black Bess" (Ellis), Miss Perrett; banjo solos, "Baiser D'Amour Waltz" (Cammeyer), "Georgia Medley" (Morley), Mr. Alf North.

Further playing by the Club concluded an enjoyable evening.

Hon. Pianist, Mrs. North. Hon. Secretary, Mr. Alf North, 42, Knowle Road, Bristol.

THE ABERDEEN B.M.G. CLUB.

THE Aberdeen B.M.G. Club, which was recently inaugurated, has already held a few well attended meetings.

The Club meets at 8.30 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of each month at Bruce Miller's, George Street, Aberdeen, where new members are welcome.

A typical programme is:—Community item: "Tattoo"; J. van Lyle, "Tune Tonic," "Take Your Pick" (banjo solos); R. Fraser and R. Morgan, "A Sprig of Shillelagh," "Darktown Dandies" (banjo duets); W. Stewart and J. Yule, "Summer Dreams" (mandoline duet); E. Ritchie and J. Yule, "True Blue" (mandoline and banjo); T. McGregor, "A Banjo Vamp" (banjo solo); J. Marr, "Eileen Alannah" (plectrum banjo); E. Dean, "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man," "Miss Annabel Lee" (piano solos).

MANCHESTER B.M.G. CLUB.

AT the monthly meeting of the Manchester B.M.G. Club the following items were played: "Valse Sympathy," "The Minstrel Man," "Rugby Parade," "Footlight Favourite," "Kentucky Memories" and "Stars are Shining."

Solos—Mr. G. R. Spindler played "Pompadour," F. Mitchell "Dixie Medley," M. Routledge "The Banshee," Messrs. Spindler, Beasley, Mitchell and Mrs. Whitehead (mondoline) played "A Plantation Episode."

Volumn IV of KEYNOTES, from January to December, 1928 contains the following Banjo Solos, arranged finger style, in addition to Solos for the Guitar, Ukulele and Steel Guitar, etc., and articles of interest.

Ain't that a Grand and Glorious Feeling	**Tired Hands**
The Doll Dance	**C'est Vous**
I Ain't got Nobody	**Worrin'**
Where, O Where do I Live	**Bless her Little Heart**
Charmaine	**My Inspiration is You**
Nicolette	**Stay out of the South**

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"STRAND" B.M.G. ORCHESTRA. (Derby & District.)

THE "Strand" B.M.G. Orchestra, Derby and District, held their February meeting on Saturday, the 2nd inst., at the Studio, Messrs. Edgar Horne & Co., Derby, the programme for the afternoon being:—

Concerted items, "Tattoo" (Grimshaw), "Happy go lucky" (Grimshaw); mandoline quartet, with Spanish guitar accompaniment, "Love's but a Dream" (Paroletti), Misses H. M. Betteridge, S. Carberry, H. Dawson, Mrs. E. Dawson, Mr. A. Dawson; concerted items, "The Possum's Picnic" (E. Calcott), "Tune Tonic" (Grimshaw); mandoline solo, "Marche des Petit Pierrots" (Hudson), Miss Sheila Carberry, a promising young player of ten years; concerted items, "Circus Parade" (Morley), "Gold Diggers' March" (Morley); mandoline solos with ukulele accompaniment, "Ramona" (Gilbert-Wain), "Just like Darby and Joan" (J. G. Gilbert), Miss H. Dawson and Mrs. E. Dawson; banjo duet, "Nuts and Wine" (Morley), Mr. Thos. Chattoe, Mrs. Dawson; mandoline solos, with Spanish guitar acompaniment, "Lullaby" (Stavordale), "Marche des Pierettes" (Hudson), Misses H. Dawson, N. M. Betteridge, Mrs. Dawson, Mr. A. Dawson; concerted item, "Les Picadors Marche" (Grimshaw); Mr. Eric Allport accompanied at the piano.

THE ILFORD B.M.G. CLUB.

THE twelfth meeting of this Club was held last evening at the Elite Dancing Academy, High Road, Ilford, when a programme worthy of a first anniversary was provided. "Banjo Vamp," "Beat as you go," "Tattoo" and "Dusky Dandy" were played as community items by the entire club, and before the interval for refreshments the following numbers were given:—

Plectrum banjo solo, "Sonny Boy," Mr. Williams; zither banjo solo, "Minstrel Man," Miss Allen; zither banjo solo, "Gallant Middies," Mr. Constantine; mandoline solo, "Santiago," Mr. W. T. Morse; banjo duet, "Palace Polka," Messrs. Greenslade, Senior, and Junior; banjo solo, "White Coons," Mr. Frank Greenslade; banjo solo, "Fun and Frolic," Mr. Cuffley; zither banjo solo, "A Summer Night," Mr. Butler.

After refreshments an excellent recital of tenor banjo duets was given by Messrs. J. James and Mr. W. T. Morse, assisted by Miss Hilda Morse at the piano. These gentlemen gave a fine rendering of: "Banjoviality," "Whyte Ladie," "Savoy Rag," "Take your Pick," "Get Goin'," and "My Lady Jazz," and their recital was very much appreciated. Mr. James belongs to the Leytonstone Banjo Club; and in favouring us with his company, put into effect the idea of inter-club visits, concerning which I have had some correspondence with neighbouring clubs. The next meeting will be held on 18th March.

NORTH LONDON B.M.G. CLUB.

THIRTY-TWO members and visitors were present at the fifth meeting of the North London B.M.G. Club on 28th January. After community playing the following solos were played under a scheme of request items: "Evening Reverie," "Nuts and Wine," "Golddiggers' March," "Banjo Vamp," "Black Coquette," "Japanese Patrol," and "Radio Jig." During the evening Miss Holland and Miss Winter, visitors from the London B.M.G. Club, played two duets, "Cafe au Lait" and "Jogging Along," these items being greatly appreciated.

"Return of the Regiment" was chosen as a further community item.

Repairs to all Musical Instrument — at John Alvey Turner's.

THE LONDON B.M.G. CLUB.

THE February meeting took place at the Y.M.C.A., Tottenham Court Road, W.C., on Monday, the 11st ult., when forty-eight members and friends were present. We are sorry to hear so many members, including the President, were laid up with influenza.

The chairman, Mr. Llewellyn Davies, opened the meeting at 8 p.m., and after the members had played the presidential march, "Clubmates," the following compulsory playing took place :—

Mr. E. J. Steeden, "Kilties" (Grimshaw) ; Mr. C. K. Sisley, "Banjo Frolic" (Morley) ; Mr. L. J. Galpine, "Echoes of Darky Land" ; Mr. A. J. Lee, "Le Chant de Gondolier" (Carpo) ; Mr. R. D. Barker, "Darktown Dandies" (Morley) ; Mr. B. Bell, "Go, go" (Colicchio) ; Mr. M. D. Berry, "Down Devon Way" (Cammeyer) ; Mr. J. C. Robertson, "Caprice Accidental" (Cammeyer) ; Mr. B. Harrison, "Reverie in F" (Hind) ; Mr. R. E. Heath, "The Banshee" (Grimshaw) ; Mr. F. H. Scott, "Jogging Along" (Morley) ; Mr. J. Morley, "Sports Parade" (Morley).

Mr. Joe Morley later played two more pieces, "Donkey Laugh" (by request) and "Kingdom Comin'."

After refreshments Mr. W. Raven gave the member's fifteen minute recital, playing "The Dancers' Dream" (Cammeyer), "Gavotte de Concert" (Morley), "In Honeyland" (Cammeyer) and "A Mexican Ride" (Grimshaw) ; the recital was greatly enjoyed by all. Miss D. Courtney will give the member's recital in March. The Community playing followed, during which Mr. Joe Morley led the members through two of the items.

The following were chosen for March : "It's Monday Night" (Cammeyer), "Butterfly" (Morley), "Darkies' Dawn" (Lansing), and "King of Clubs" (Musselbrook).

Members are particularly requested to sign the book on entering the club room. The Committee desire to remind members that all subscriptions became due on January 1st, and to save correspondence those still outstanding should be sent to the Honorary Secretary, Miss E. Shuter, The Tower House, Harrow-on-the-Hill, at once.

It has been decided to hold a competition in playing amongst members at the October meeting, particulars having already been announced by the Chairman at the meetings. This will be explained briefly at each meeting until October and all members are urged to enter ; the winner will have her or his name inscribed on the Clifford Essex Trophy for 1929.

The next Club meeting will take place at the Y.M.C.A., Tottenham Court Road, W.C., on Monday, 11th March, when anyone desirousof joining will be heartily welcomed.

THE February meeting of past and present pupils arranged by Mr. Ernest Taylor, was held on the 13th ult.

The following items were rendered :—

Mr. Ernest Taylor (banjo), "Devil May Care" ; Mr. A. Peters (tenor banjo), "A Banjo Vamp" ; Misses Hunter, Martindale and Morland (mandoline trio), "Pierrot's March" ; Mr. W. Helm (banjo), "A Darkey's Romance" ; Miss M. Taylor (plectrum banjo), "Speedwell" ; Misses Fisher and Hunter (duet), "Dream Song"; Mr. F. Rigby (banjo), "Big Boot Dance."

Community items, "A Mexican Ride" and "Gold Diggers, March." A recital was given by Mr. Percy Atkinson, who played the following numbers :— Banjo (finger style), "A Coon in a Kiosk" and "Rugby Parade" ; banjo (plectrum style), "Tune Tonic" and "Kilties." Mr. Atkinson produces a pleasing tone and his recital was much enjoyed.

Miss M. Taylor was again the accompanist.

LEIGH-ON-SEA B.M.G. CLUB.

THE following items were played at the February meetings of the Leigh-on-Sea B.M.G. Club :— Banjo solos, Mr. Behar, "Darktown Dandies," "Rondevous" ; banjo solos, Mr. Edwards, "Mauna Loa," "Minstrel Man" ; banjo solos, Mr. Waddington, "Reverie in F," "Prelude and Waltz," "Leisure Moments" ; banjo solo, Mr. Unger, "Nuts and Wine" ; banjo solos, Mr. Rivers, "Marguerite Waltz," "Humoresque," "To the Front" ; banjo solo, Mr. Millis, "Banjo Vamp" ; banjo solo, Mr. Norton Greenop, "Solitude" ; banjo solos, Mr. Barker, "Georgia Medley," "Policeman's Holiday" ; banjo solo, Mr. Sparrow, "Beat as you go" ; banjo solo, Mr. Pratt, "Camptown Races" ; banjo duet, Messrs. Behar and Edwards, "Spanish Romance" ; guitar solo, Mrs. Waddington, "Meditation" ; Hawaiian guitar duet, Messrs. Josceling and Waddington, "Amperita" ; Hawaiian guitar trio, Messrs. Henry and Waddington and Miss Hunter, "Love Song" ; Hawaiian guitar quintet, Messrs. Henry, Josceling and Waddington, Miss Hunter and Mrs. Waddington, "Lellitu Waltz" ; banjo and two banjuleles, Messrs. E. and F. Shillinglaw and Greenop, "Sweet Sue" ; community numbers, "Return of the Regiment," "Darkies' Romance," "Musical Ride." Mrs. Edwards, the club's official pianist, ably carried out the duties of accompanist.

THE SOUTH LONDON B.M.G. CLUB.

THE 31st meeting of the Club was held as usual at 361, Brixton Road, on Monday, February 11th, 30 members being present.

In addition to the band practice the following members obliged with solos, etc. Miss Millen, Messrs. Dray, Fowlds, Bloomfield, Milner, Smith, Betts, Williams, Barnden and Poole.

The next meeting will be on Monday, March 11th.

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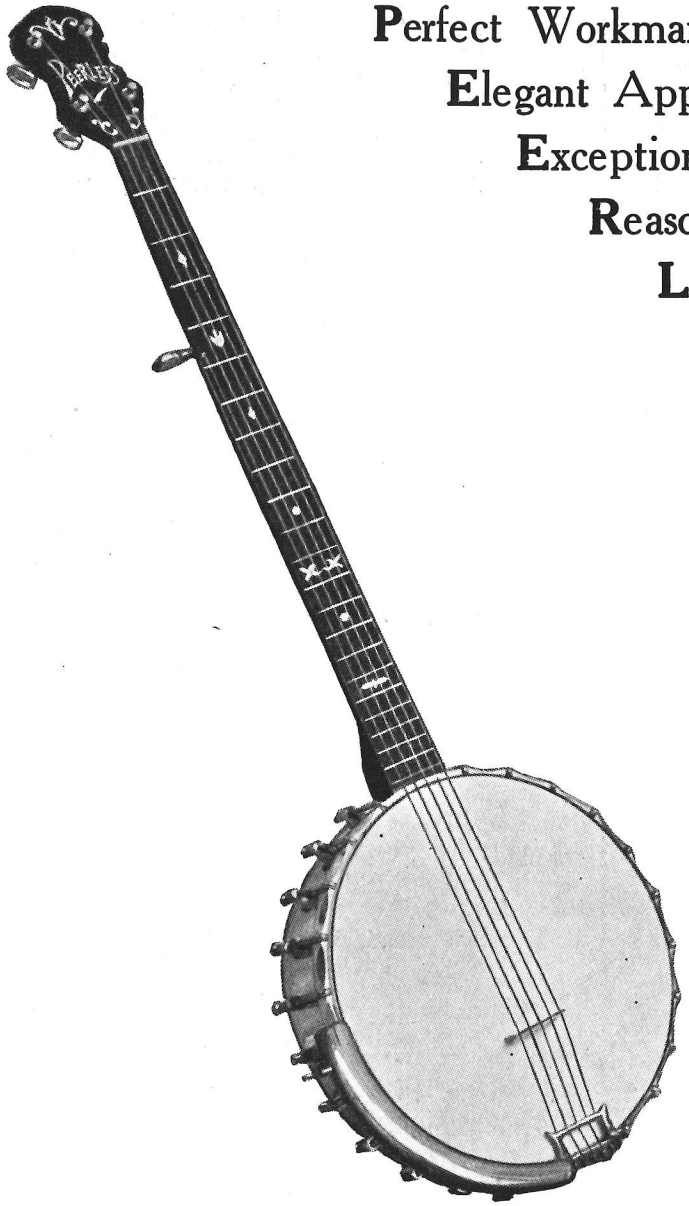

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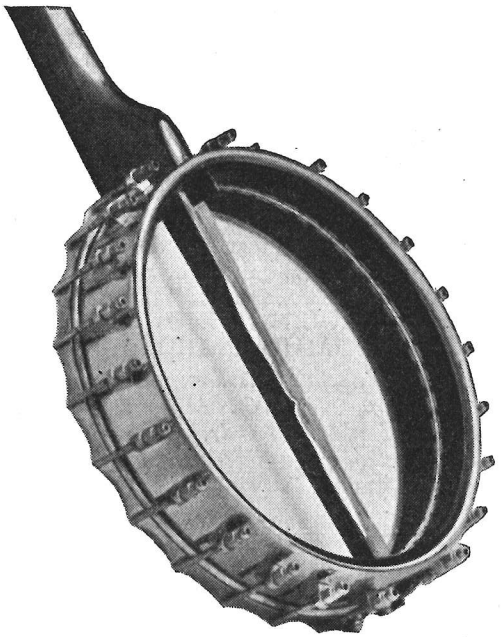

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